

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

12-17 Orleans G EAS.33
LHD 1986, NRDIS 2001

Town/City: EASTHAM

Place: (*neighborhood or village*): Old Town Center

Photograph



Address: 2765 State Highway

Historic Name: George and Bethiah Seabury House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: ca. 1823

Source: Deed research, oral history

Style/Form: Federal/ Full Cape

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Brick

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Large, gable-roofed cottage behind main house
(Assessor date of 1945, Photos 2, 3)

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

Window replacements, small additions off main block and rear ell (likely mid-20th c. or earlier)

Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.77 acres

Setting: This parcel is located at the southwest corner of Locust Road and State Highway, facing east across the State Highway to Salt Pond. The house is set close to the road on a slight rise. The parcel is left open in front of and on sides of the house with lawn and no foundation plantings. A small set of concrete steps rise up from the sidewalk. A short driveway loops from the State Highway to Locust Road.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant, for

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): April 2025

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

This house is an intact example of a Federal-style Full Cape. Built in ca. 1823, the 1 ½-story house has the five-bay configuration with centered entrance typical of the Full Cape form. In addition to the main block, there is a large rear ell that has itself received a series of additions, and there is a small hip-roofed addition on the left (south) elevation (see Photos 3, 4). The main block of the house rests on a parged brick foundation. The elevations are clad in painted wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles (wood shingles originally), and a brick chimney rises from the roof ridge in alignment with the front entrance, typical of Full Capes. A small brick chimney rises from the west end of the rear ell, and there is an exterior, concrete block chimney on the south side of the ell.

The front entrance surround is the primary Federal-style feature. The elegant door surround consists of broad pilasters rising up to a molded lintel. The front door itself is obscured by a wood storm door and flag, but would likely have been a six-panel wood door. Fenestration on the main block now consists of wood, single-glazed 2/1 double-hung sash. The 1985 Form B states that these windows are set in projecting frames, but that is not the case; other than the projecting sills, the frames are flush with the shingle siding. There is one small, square 2/2 window set close to the front roof slope on the second story of the south side elevation. It is unusual for there to be only one – typically these windows would have been installed at both ends of the elevation, and also usually on both sides.

The fieldstone foundation of what had been a large barn to the northwest of the main house is visible from Locust Road (Photo 4).

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Incorporated as Nauset Plantation in 1646, and changed to Eastham in 1651, Eastham territory originally extended south to Pleasant Bay and north beyond Wellfleet Harbor. The early development pattern for what we now know as Eastham was impacted by its absence of deep-water harbor facilities. Relatively fertile soil led to dispersed agricultural settlement, but residential and commercial development was concentrated to the north at Wellfleet Harbor and to the south at Town Cove and Pleasant Bay. When the separate towns of Wellfleet and Orleans were created in the late-18th century, Eastham became and remained one of the least populated towns on the Cape throughout the 19th century.

In the 19th century, Eastham was the agricultural center of the Outer Cape. Crops evolved over time; corn and dairy were surpassed in the early-20th century by asparagus and turnips - two crops well suited for the sandy soil. In 1900, 58% of Eastham's workers were employed as farmers, but by 1930 that number had dwindled to 21%. Summer resort development, including cottage colonies and subdivisions of former farmland that would transform Eastham, had begun in earnest in the 1920s as middle-class access to car ownership increased and Cape roads were improved.

This Federal-style Full Cape was built on land that Joseph Mayo, Gentleman of Eastham, sold in 1823 to George Seabury, Blacksmith, also of Eastham.¹ According to descendants of Seabury, this house was built soon thereafter. Orleans-born George Seabury (1795-1889) married Bethiah Mayo (1799-1871) in Orleans in 1820. In addition to being a blacksmith, George Seabury was appointed postmaster in August of 1843. Two months prior, he had purchased a store that was located next to his house that

¹ Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Book 999041/ Page 330.

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had been built earlier that year by his son-in-law, Timothy Sparrow, Trader.² Perhaps he purchased this store in anticipation of becoming postmaster or perhaps he used it for his blacksmith business. The 1858 Map of Cape Cod shows this house and a second building to the south identified as "Store, P.O." It is curious that Seabury's name is not included on this map next to his house (Figure 2). Seabury served as postmaster for 17 years. According to the 1985 version of this Form B, the house also served as a stagecoach stop.

The property passed to George and Bethiah Seabury's daughter, Deborah (1828-1905). She had married Worcester County-born Roland Doane in Eastham in 1854. Roland Doane (1808-1881) was a master mariner, but by the 1880 census was listed as a huckster. It should be noted that two buildings are shown on the 1880 Barnstable County Atlas in this location (presumably this house and the store) with the name D. Higgins (Figure 3). The identity of this Higgins remains a mystery. Perhaps the Doanes had rented the property to Higgins, but the Doanes were still listed living in Eastham in the 1880 census.

In 1889, Deborah Doane conveyed her interest in this property to her grandson, John W. Sparrow. The house is shown, but not the store, on the 1910 Barnstable County Atlas with the name "J. W. Sparrow" (Figure 4). John W. Sparrow (1857-1938) was the son of the afore-mentioned Timothy Sparrow who had married another of George and Bethiah's daughters, Louisa (b. 1837). John Sparrow married Ireland-born Catherine Flynn (1867-1943). According to his obituary in *The Boston Globe* on November 24, 1938, he was "an old-time seafaring man and former hotel chef." He worked at the Poland Spring House in Poland ME, the Green Hotel in Pasadena, the Hampton House in Bermuda, and the Yellowstone Park Hotel. According to the 1985 Form B, in later years John Sparrow grew asparagus and had extensive acreage along Locust Road on the west side of the railroad tracks.

After Catherine Sparrow's death in 1943, the house passed to their daughters Eletha and Esther. Eletha (1903-1988) had married Francis Kelley Kendrick (1902-1985) and they lived in Chatham where he worked as a fisherman and cranberry grower. Esther (1902-1999) had married William Manimon in 1941. As of the 1950 census, they were living in Westwood and he was working as a machinist in a tannery. Neither Sparrow daughter appears to have had children.

This house was inherited by Normana and Beverly Plante of Eastham (kinship unknown). In 2000, they sold it to Karl Slabinski and Oliver Davis of Provincetown.³ Two years later, they sold it to Louise Ray of Wellfleet.⁴ She was living in Eastham in 2018 when she sold this property to the current owners, Mitchell Cahill and Alicia Urella of Eastham.⁵

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www.ancestry.com - Vital records.

² Book 35/ Page 529.

³ Book 133447/ Page 299.

⁴ Book 15379/ Page 17.

⁵ Book 31057/ Page 285.

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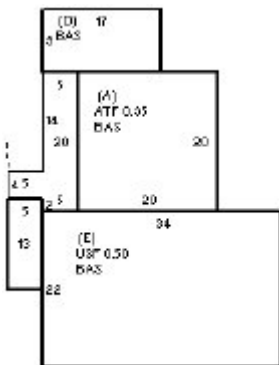


Figure 1. Assessor Sketch.



Photo 2. View from State Highway, looking west.



Photo 3. View from State Highway, looking northwest.

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Photo 4. View looking south from Locust Road of north elevations of main house and cottage, and barn foundation.



Figure 2. Detail of 1858 Map of Cap Cod (arrows added).



Figure 3. Detail of 1880 Barnstable County Atlas (arrow added).

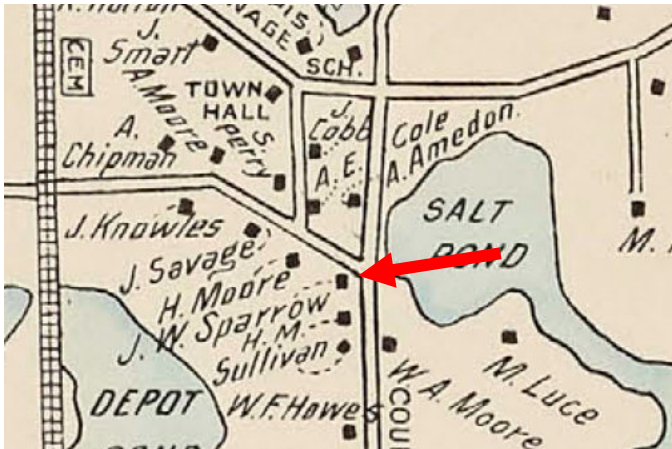


Figure 4. Detail of 1910 Barnstable County Atlas (arrow added).